



# Dealing with Whining

Children Whine for a reason! Why?

## **The child may be tired...**

- ◆ A child who needs a nap or bedtime may whine. She may whine and not want to go to bed even though sleep is what is needed.
- ◆ A child may whine when tired of an activity
- ◆ A child may whine because he is tired of trying to sit still

## **The child may need attention...**

- ◆ Some children need more adult attention than others. Some are happy to play alone, but most children need a lot of contact with their parents
- ◆ Children often start whining to get an adult to pay attention to them.

## **The child may be worried...**

- ◆ A child may whine because he is worried or afraid. Example: A child who is afraid to go into a dark room alone may whine.

## **The child may not know any better...**

- ◆ A child may whine because she hasn't learned a better way to get something or do something.

## **Things to do**

### **When your child whines, notice what is happening...**

- ◆ Is he tired? Hungry? Does he need attention?
- ◆ Is he worried? Is there something he doesn't know how to get?

### **When you know what is wrong, you can decide what to do**

#### **If your child is tired...**

- ◆ Comfort her and put her down for a nap (or to bed).
- ◆ A child who whines before bed may need an earlier bedtime.

#### **If your child needs attention...**

- ◆ Try to give attention before the whining starts. Several times during the day, take a few minutes to hug, cuddle and talk.
- ◆ If you can't stop what you are doing, reassure him and tell him when you will be through. Example: "When I finish cleaning up the kitchen, I'll read that book to you."

#### **If your child is worried...**

- ◆ Comfort your child. It won't help to fuss to him or make fun of his fear. For example, don't say: "Only babies are afraid of the dark." Instead, say: "Sometimes its scary in the dark. But I won't let anything hurt you."

#### **If your child doesn't know any better...**

- ◆ Teach your child how to get or do something by using words. Example: "I don't like to listen to whining. You can use words to ask for a cookie."

#### **If your child whines often...**

- ◆ If children find out that whining works, they'll keep on whining.
- ◆ If whining is turning into a habit, you might try saying: I can't hear you when you use that tone of voice. Please say that without whining. If the child keeps on whining, don't respond.



**Sometimes it's best just to ignore whining.**